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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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TC 1700

Applicants: EZUMI, et al.  
Serial No.: 10/054,852  
Filed: January 25, 2002  
For: FRICTION STIR WELDING METHOD, AND HOLLOW SHAPE  
MEMBER FOR FRICTION STIR WELDING  
Group: 1725  
Examiner: L. Edmondson

AMENDMENT

Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

February 24, 2003

Sir:

In response to the Office Action mailed January 24, 2003, please amend the above-identified application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 13-24 without prejudice or disclaimer.

REMARKS

The Restriction Requirement set forth in the Office Action mailed January 24, 2003, in connection with the above-identified application, is noted. In response thereto, Applicants are canceling the Groups II and III claims (that is, claims 13-19 and 20-24) without prejudice or disclaimer, and in particular without prejudice to the filing of a Divisional application or applications directed to the subject matter thereof.

Requirement set forth in the Office Action mailed January 24, 2003, is moot.

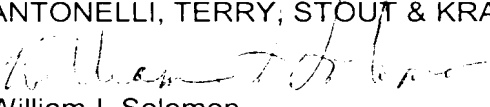
In any event, to complete the record, and to avoid any issue in connection with an incomplete response to the Office Action mailed January 24, 2003, Applicants respectfully elect the Group I claims (claims 1-12, drawn to a friction stir welding method) for prosecution on the merits in the present application, this election being made without traverse.

In view of the foregoing, consideration of the Group I claims on the merits in the above-identified application, in due course, is respectfully requested.

To the extent necessary, Applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to the Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (Case No. 648-4111X00) and please credit any excess fees to such Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

ANTONELLI, TERRY, STOUT & KRAUS, LLP

  
William I. Solomon  
Registration No. 28,565

1300 North Seventeenth Street  
Suite 1800  
Arlington, VA 22209  
Tel.: 703-312-6600  
Fax.: 703-312-6666  
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